

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union  
and Associated States concerning the start  
of peace talks in Colombia on 7 January 1999**

The European Union and Associated States welcome with great satisfaction the start of peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) on 7 January 1999 in San Vicente de Caguan, Caqueta.

By their presence at the talks, at the invitation of the Colombian Government, the Heads of Mission of the Member States of the European Union, and of the Associated States, wish to underline the great importance they attach to this event, and express their hope that these talks will provide a decisive impulse towards a sustainable peace in Colombia. In this process the early release of all hostages including foreigners is necessary.

The European Union and the Associated States take this opportunity to reaffirm their political support for the efforts of the Colombian government in the process that is about to start.

They note with satisfaction the readiness to talk in the search for peace demonstrated by the FARC.

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